

## Side Event at COP21: What are NAMAs and how is civil society engagement important for their success

9 December, Paris, France

Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) were established as a vehicle to help developing countries pursue their development and mitigation goals. However, owing to the absence of regulations on stakeholder engagement and lack of environmental criteria, NAMAs face several challenges. The need for an event on NAMAs that coincided with COP21 was supported by the fact that NAMAs are often considered the 'new kid on the block' and are not widely understood. The event offered a range of speakers to both introduce the wider implications of NAMAs and to expand on the implications of specific projects. As the event moderator, Pierre-Jean Brasier from Nature Code, opened the event by stating the relevance of a NAMAs event as the development of climate financing and climate actions expands beyond traditional approaches. Furthermore, Pierre-Jean highlighted the fundamental role civil society can and must play in NAMAs, particularly in scrutinising their implementation.

Urska Trunk, Policy Researcher at Carbon Market Watch, began with an overview of NAMAs and the benefits that civil society engagement can play in fostering sustainable and community-led projects, arguing that clear safeguards and MRV systems need to be introduced to NAMAs to avoid the pitfalls encountered by other climate financing mechanisms. Christof Arens, Project Coordinator at Wuppertal Institute, highlighted a number of the theoretical propositions facing NAMAs. Using evidence gathered from other mechanisms, Christof introduced the 'principles of implementation' necessary to properly initiate quality NAMAs. Bringing evidence from a case-study in Costa Rica, Magdalena Donoso, Latin America coordinator at GAIA, showed how lacking stakeholder consultation is 'on the ground' with NAMAs. Furthermore, she pointed to the dominance of the industrial sector in NAMAs undermining the environmental quality of projects being implemented. Concluding the speakers, Kabir Arora, National Coordinator at Alliance of Indian Wastepickers, gave evidence from the experience of Indian NAMAs to show the preference of international agencies for using waste in cement kilns. Arguing that this undermined the recycling efforts of the informal wastepicker sector, Kabir stated the need for segregation of waste at source and greater recognition of the integral role informal wastepickers can play in waste recycling.

Below is a more detailed summary of the presentations:

**Urska Trunk, Policy Researcher at Carbon Market Watch, *Introduction to NAMAs and the role of public participation***

Introducing the event and the subject, Urska Trunk, detailed the genesis of NAMAs from their beginning under UNFCCC to enhance climate change action in developing countries to mitigate emissions and promote sustainable development. Highlighting some of the issues around NAMAs, including the slow pace of introduction and lack of formal definition on what constitutes a NAMA, Urska reminded the participants of the potential for transformational impact and sustainable development for communities that NAMAs offer. The potential of NAMAs is, as Urska elucidated, rooted in the engagement of civil society and the subsequent improvements in effective implementation. Equally, the role of civil society must be supported by clear guidelines and safeguards

on stakeholder consultation. Urska was very clear in pointing out the necessity of universal safeguards for NAMAs outlining grievance mechanism, a clear MRV system, and genuine transparency.

**Christof Arens, Project Co-ordinator at Wuppertal institute:** *Do no harm: Assessing Sustainable Development Aspects and Stakeholder Participation in NAMAs*

As the 2<sup>nd</sup> speaker, Christof expanded on a number of academic and theoretical issues surrounding NAMAs, highlighting stakeholder involvement as a necessary component to 'reflect and integrate supportive and opposing views into development of respective measures.' Christof's work with the Wuppertal Institute has led him to study 8 different mechanisms including CDM, Gold Standard, Crown Standard, REDD, NAMA SD Tool, finding that:

- Stakeholder processes integral part of most approaches analysed.
- Multilateral banks have grievance mechanisms that are necessary for long-term implementation.
- Gold Standard also has independent mediators.

Within this work Christof has developed a set of 'principles of implementation' that should be integrated into NAMA protocol to reflect best practices in other mechanisms. Within this, Christof called for: representative stakeholder consultation, appropriate means of involving stakeholders, timing of involvement, proper task definition, independence, transparency, and entry of comments into decision-making process. Christof finished by articulating the difference between supported NAMAs and domestic NAMAs, particularly as the former can be influenced more heavily by donors and this factor may influence the principles of implementation applied to a project.

**Magdalena Donoso, Latin America coordinator at GAIA,** *Ordinary Solid Waste NAMA in Costa Rica: a wasted opportunity?*

Connecting the more broad and theoretical framework built by the first two speakers, Magdalena opened by stating that the problems outlined by Urska Trunk and Christof Arens 'are real on the ground.' Working with GAIA in Latin America, Magdalena used a case-study from Costa Rica to spell out the problems with NAMAs while emphasising the ability for NAMAs to be a powerful tool to direct finance to mitigation policies. In Costa Rica the waste sector is seen as a major opportunity to mitigate emissions with further co-benefits. The project aimed to capture methane in three major landfills, including the "valorisation" of dry materials, and composting and biodigestion of organic waste. Some clear problems with the project echoed the reservations of the first two speakers: Magdalena highlighted that the project was only for industrial sector, had no civil society participation, and has been hampered by complex governance over finance. The message from Magdalena's talk was clear, that the implementation of safeguards, transparency, and institutional support can improve the realities for NAMA projects on the ground where stakeholder consultation is often lagging behind the financing of projects.

**Kabir Arora, national coordinator at alliance of Indian wastepickers,** *Framing Recycling and Informal Waste Economy in NAMAs*

Kabir's focus was on the introduction of NAMAs into India's waste sector. Noting the promotion of waste to be used in cement kilns, Kabir highlighted the role of GIZ (Die Deutsche *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*) in funding NAMAs of this type. Noting the use of stakeholder consultation meetings in Delhi and Bangalore, Kabir argued that GIZ had 'taken care' of stakeholders,

but had introduced the processing of waste via cement kilns despite no support for this proposal during the meetings. Kabir was very clear in arguing that the waste sector must look beyond such a narrow set of policies and projects to incorporate the informal waste recycling sector into NAMAs to assure segregation of waste at source and move towards the phase-out of landfills. Pointing out that 10,000 metric tonnes of waste are recycled by the informal sector in India each year, this point seems particularly pertinent. Furthering his analysis of the development of NAMAs, Kabir suggested that the NAMA agenda is being dictated by international agencies rather than by 'on the ground' realities.